

EXPLORING THE LINK BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY

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ABSTRACT

Workplace spirituality & emotional intelligence are emerging concepts in management literature, however there are very less studies that have explored the relationship between the two. The present study bridges that gap by presenting a model illustrating the relationship between the two through path analysis approach. The study was conducted on 128 employees working at various capacities in service sector in and around Chandigarh region in North India. Based upon path analysis, it was found that emotional intelligence acts as an antecedent to workplace spirituality which is further linked to job satisfaction. The study has used only a small sample size, so generalized conclusion should be made with caution. However, the study shows that as emotional intelligence acts as an antecedent to workplace spirituality, the organizations can focus on the development of emotional intelligence for improving workplace spirituality, which will further improve job satisfaction.

KEYWORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence & Workplace Spirituality

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence has become one of the important concepts in present times. Many researchers have linked the presence of emotional intelligence in employees to their high performance in the work units (Abraham, 1999). Similarly Ashkanasy & Hooper (1999) has associated positive emotions with high likelihood of success at work. Emotional intelligence is also found to be important for effective leadership, as effective leadership involves social intelligence to manage the behavioural complexities of followers (Boal K. B., 1992) (Boal K. B., 2000). Similarly, developing emotional intelligence is also used to make leadership training effective (Day, 2000). Daniel Goleman in his famous book Emotional intelligence has elaborated on the importance of emotional intelligence in meeting the complexities of present business world. For e.g. he has stated that cognitive intelligence may provide individuals with entry to a setting, but emotional intelligence plays an important role in determining how successful they are after they enter the setting (Goleman, 1995). According to Goleman (1998) emotional intelligence affects people's physical and mental health and also their career achievements. Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on the followers and it could also be understood from the perspective of social exchange theory, where by leaders who bestow psychological benefits like approval, respect, esteem and affection to their followers extract higher performance from their followers (Hollander, 1979). Similarly Mumford, Zaccaro,

Harding, Jacobs, & Fleishman (2000) asserted that effective leadership behavior fundamentally depends upon the leader's ability to solve complex social problems that arise in organizations. In an empirical investigation by Wong & Law (2002), it was found that Emotional Intelligence of followers affects job performance and job satisfaction, while the EI of leaders affects their satisfaction and extra-role behavior. However, the relationship is moderated by the extent of emotional labor in the jobs (Wong & Law, 2002). Thus we can say that it has been established empirically that emotional intelligence has the positive effect on the job performance of an employee.

Let us look at the meaning of the concept of emotional intelligence. According to Leeper (1948) emotions are "processes which arouse, sustain, and direct activity" (p.17). Similarly according to Salovey & Mayer (1990) emotions can be distinguished from the closely related concept of mood in that emotions are shorter and generally more intense. Intelligence is explained by Wechsler (1939) as the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with the environment. Based upon that Salovey & Mayer (1990) first coined the term Emotional Intelligence as the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. There is a consensus among the researchers of emotional intelligence that it consists of four domains as initially described by Salovey & Mayer (1990) as appraisal of self emotion, Appraisal of emotions in others, regulation of emotions in oneself & utilization of emotion (Davies, Stankov, & Roberts, 1998). Similarly Shi & Wang (2007) has mentioned that each theoretical paradigm conceptualizes emotional intelligence from one of the three perspectives: ability, mixed model, or trait. Ability models regard emotional intelligence as a pure form of mental ability and thus as a pure intelligence. The mixed models of emotional intelligence combine mental ability with personality characteristics such as optimism and well-being (Mayer, 1999). However by combining intellective and non-ability traits, mixed models do not claim EI to be a type of intelligence (Goleman, 2005). Thus the trait models that classify EI measures as trait and state measures (emotional self-efficacy), refers to a constellation of behavioral dispositions and self-perceptions concerning one's ability to recognize, process, and utilize emotion-laden information (Petrides & Furnham, 2001) are better option to measure EI.

There are various scales that measure EI as trait, for e.g. there is a 133-item self-report Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) measure which consists of 15 distinct scales. These scales include the ones measuring: emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualization, independence, empathy, interpersonal relationships, social responsibility, problem solving, reality testing, flexibility, stress tolerance, impulse control, happiness and optimism (Bar-On, 1996). Similarly Bernet (1996) has developed 93-item Style in the Perception of Affect scale based on the premise that being able to attend rapidly, appropriately and effortlessly to feelings is the cornerstone of emotional intelligence. The measure assesses respondents' preferences for the following three styles: body-based, evaluation-based and logic-based perception of affect. It was also found that body based perception of affect scale was associated with better mental health, awareness of small bodily changes, social skill, contentment and creativity. Similarly Cooper & Sawaf (1997) has developed EQ MAP test, 250 items which divide into 21 subscales. However, there was no information regarding the measure's reliability or validity. Similarly Goleman (1995) also developed 10-item measure of EI without any validation evidence. Also, Schutte et al. (1997) developed a 33-item measure, using the original model of emotional intelligence of Salovey and Mayer (1990). However there is little consensus on the measurement methods of EI (Salovey, Woolery, & Mayer, 2001). In the light of the above reason, Wong & Law (2002) developed self-report scale consisting of 16 items based on four sub-scales of self-emotion appraisal, uses of emotion, regulation of emotion, and others' emotion appraisal. The scale is validated and was found to predict external criterion variables such as life satisfaction. Compared to

the one-factor model (Schutte, et al., 1997), the four-factor model fits well with CFA (Shi & Wang, 2007). Bar-On's EQ-i definition of EI is slightly different from the definition of Mayer and Salovey, and the scale includes a number of dimensions that may not relate to EI directly (e.g., problem solving, social responsibility, etc.) (Shi & Wang, 2007). Thus in the present study, we have used the scale developed by Wong & Law, as it has less no. of items and also satisfies the criteria of validity & reliability across cultures (Nele, Beuckelaer, Lievens, & Rockstuhl, 2014).

1.2. Workplace Spirituality

Workplace Spirituality as discussed by McCormick (1994) has the following themes namely compassion, right livelihood, selfless service, meditative work, and the problem of pluralism. Similarly Ashmos & Duchon (2000) has given the following three dimensions to the concept of workplace spirituality: meaningful work, sense of community & inner life. In their extensive work Mitroff & Denton (1999) has separate workplace spirituality from religion and found interconnectedness as fundamental component of spirituality. Similarly Giacalone & Jurkiewicz (2003) has defined workplace spirituality as a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promote employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy. The concept of workplace spirituality could be understood from many points of views for e.g. Krishnakumar & Neck (2002) has given three views on the meaning of spirituality: - the intrinsic origin view, religious view & the existential view.

There are lots of benefits of practicing Spirituality at workplaces, for e.g. Chawla & Guda (2010) has found positive correlation among workplace spirituality, Job Satisfaction & Job commitment among sales professionals in India. Similarly Llyod (1990) has observed that organizations high in workplace spirituality outperform those without it by 86 percent. Corporate world has embraced the concept of workplace spirituality as the "Spirituality at Work" movement in an attempt to make corporate life, feel more creative by tapping into the employee's spiritual side (Brandt, 1996).

There are various measures of workplace spirituality for e.g. a 21 item measure given by Ashmos & Duchon (2000). Similarly an 18 item scale, based on 4 dimensions of engaging work, sense of community, spiritual connection & mystical experience given by Kinjerski & Skrypnek (2006). Person-organization fit scale is demonstrated by Sheep (2004). Then there is spiritual climate inventory scale given by Pandey, Gupta, & Arora (2009). However, for the purpose of the present study, it was found that scale used by Ashmos & Duchon (2000) best fits the purpose.

1.3. Workplace Spirituality & Emotional Intelligence

There are very few studies that have examined the relationship between workplace spirituality & emotional intelligence. For e.g. Jerry & McKeage (2002) has found that both EI & Spirituality leads to personal competence & social competence which further leads to self-awareness & social awareness and that leads to host of skills like self management, leadership etc. They have further stated that relationship between EI & SI needs to be explored and have given five possible models of that relationship. To bridge that gap in research, the present study was undertaken and found conclusive evidence that both these concepts are interlinked and that the development of one leads to the development of other.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Question

To determine if emotional intelligence causes workplace spirituality or vice-versa.

2.2. Sample Size & Profile

For the purpose of the present study, a sample size of 200 respondents was initially decided, however after many follow-ups, valid responses of only 128 respondents could be gathered, thus, giving response rate of only 64%. For the purpose of data collection, both physical form of questionnaire was distributed to the respondents & online version using Google form was also used. In the sample taken, 55% of the organizations were from Banking & Financial sector, 29% represents educational sector & the remaining others are organizations dealing in various kinds of services like IT, Telecommunication, etc. About 45 % of the sample consists of employees at managerial designation, 40% consists of employees at clerical level. And the remaining 15% consists of those in teaching position. About 80% of the sample has age less than 40 years. 6% of the sample has age between 40 to 50 years and remaining 14% has age of more than 50 years. About 57% of the sample consists of females and remaining 43% consists of males. The mean work experience of the sample was 10.39 years with SD of 8.9 years.

2.3. Research Instrument

Standardized measures of emotional intelligence by Wong & Law (2002) and of workplace spirituality by Ashmos & Duchon (2000) was used. The first section of questionnaire consisted of information on demographics of respondents like name, organization, designation, age, gender & total work experience. The second part of questionnaire consisted of statements on workplace spirituality. The third part of the questionnaire consisted of statements on emotional intelligence. The third section also contained question on satisfaction with job. The standardized scales were measured using the five point Likert scale where one aspect represented strongly disagree & other five represented strongly agree.

3. EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

3.1. Emotional Intelligence

Before proceeding further, the factor structure for the construct of workplace spirituality & emotional intelligence has to be confirmed. For this purpose exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the construct of emotional intelligence. As the sample size is more than 100, according to Stevens (2002) (cited in (Field, 2009, p. 644)), factor loadings should be greater than .522. The factor structure so obtained is presented in Table 1. The KMO measure for sampling adequacy has a value of .650. The Cronbach alpha value for the overall scale has a value of .863 & for individual components, the Cronbach alpha value is as follows: Self Emotions Appraisal (.888); Others Emotions Appraisal (.812); Use of Emotion (.741) & Regulation of Emotion (.877). The final scale has 13 items, as some items could not be retained because of low factor loadings. The final scale has three items in self-emotions appraisal, three items in others-emotions appraisal, three items in use of emotion & four items in regulation of emotion.

Table 1: Factor Structure for the Scale of Emotional Intelligence

	Component			
	ROE	SEA	OEA	UOE
I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally.	.897			
I have good control of my own emotions.	.835			
I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.	.818			
I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions.	.758			
I have good understanding of my own emotions.		.925		
I really understand what I feel.		.845		
I always know whether or not I am happy.		.822		
I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior.			.874	
I am a good observer of others' emotions.			.803	
I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.			.697	
I am a self-motivated person.				.801
I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them.				.736
I would always encourage myself to try my best.		.537		.596
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				

ROE-Regulation of Emotion, SEA-Self Emotions Appraisal,
OEA-Others Emotions Appraisal, UOE-Use of Emotions

3.2. Workplace Spirituality

In case of workplace spirituality, the factor structure is shown in Table 2. As the sample size is small, the factor loading for the purpose of retention of items has been kept at .512 as per the guidelines given by Stevens (2002) (cited in (Field, 2009, p. 644)). The final scale has 10 items, three items from sense of community, three items from meaningful work & four items from inner life. The KMO measure for sampling adequacy has a value of .717. The Cronbach's alpha value for the overall scale is .816 & for individual components is as follows: Sense of Community (.666), Meaningful Work (.718) and Inner Life (.903).

4. PATH ANALYSIS

To answer the research question, there is a possibility of two models: the first model is assuming that emotional intelligence acts as an antecedent to workplace spirituality which further causes job satisfaction. The second model assumes that workplace spirituality causes emotional intelligence which further causes job satisfaction. These models are discussed in the following sections.

4.1. Emotional Intelligence as an Antecedent to Workplace Spirituality

For path analysis, factor scores were calculated through Anderson-Rubin method in SPSS, as this method provides factor scores that are uncorrelated & standardized that has mean of zero & standard deviation of one (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) (Cited in (Field, 2009, p. 635)). The path analysis model is shown in Figure 1.

Table 2: Factor Structure for the Scale of Workplace Spirituality

	Component		
	Inner Life	Meaningful Work	Sense of Community
I consider myself a spiritual person.	.922		
I care about the spiritual health of my co-workers.	.876		
My spiritual values influences the choices I make	.842		
Prayer is an important part of my life.	.825		
The work I do is connected to what I think is important in life.		.830	
I believe others experience joy as a result of my work.		.742	
I understand what gives my work personal meaning.		.730	
When I have a concern I represent it to the appropriate person.			.813
I am valued at work for who I am.			.755
I feel part of a community in my immediate workplace (department, unit, etc.).			.741
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. ^a			

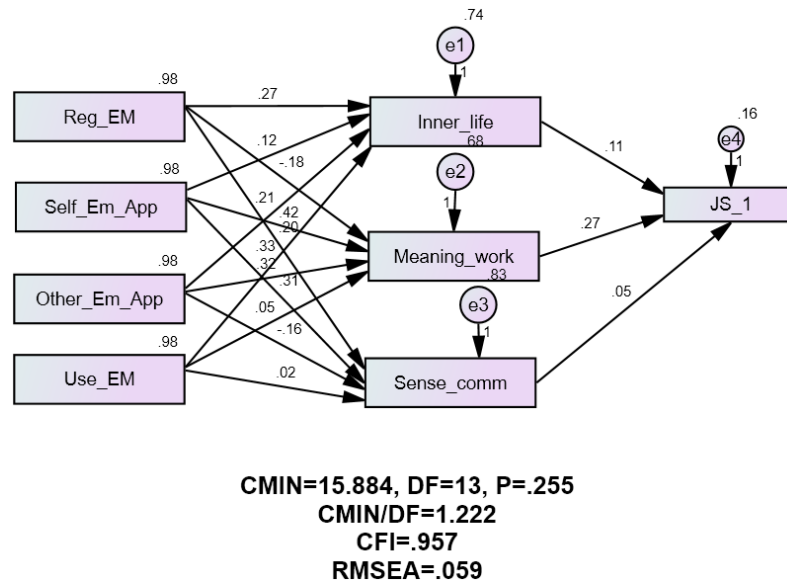
**Figure 1: Path Analysis for Model 1**

Figure 1 shows that the model has all the three fits i.e. absolute fit, with RMSEA value of .059, which should be less than .08 as per (Browne & Cudeck, 1989), comparative fit, with CFI value of .957, which should be greater than .9 & parsimonious fit with CMIN/DF value of 1.222, as the value less than 2 represents good model fit as per Byrne (1989, p. 55).

4.2. Workplace Spirituality as an Antecedent to Emotional Intelligence

The next model of interest is to check whether workplace spirituality acts as an antecedent to emotional intelligence. The path analysis for this model is shown in the Figure 2.

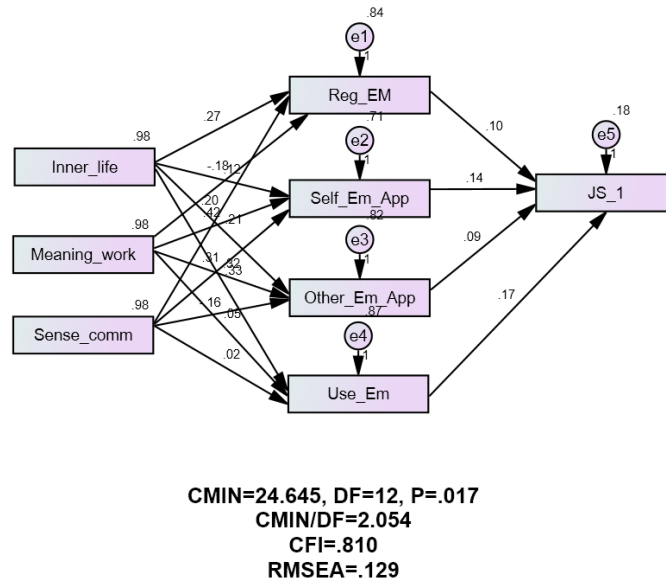


Figure 2: Path Analysis for Model 2

As seen in the Figure 2, the model has reasonable parsimonious fit with the value of CMIN/DF=2.054, as the value between 1 to 3 represents an acceptable fit as per (Carmines & McIver, 1981); however as per Byrne (1989, p. 55), CMIN/DF value less than 2 represents inadequate model fit. Similarly this model has reasonable comparative fit with CFI a value of .810, as the value of CFI greater than .9 represents good model fit. Also the RMSEA value of .129 represents inadequate model fit as according to (Browne & Cudeck, 1989), models having value of RMSEA greater than .1 should not be employed.

4.3. Comparative Analysis of Model 1 & Model 2

On comparing model 1 & model 2, it was found that both the models are distinct, with chi-square difference between the two models was found to be significant (chi-square difference=8.716, $p=0.003$). Also, in terms of model fit, it could be seen that in model 1, EI acting as an antecedent to WS is a superior model as compared to model 2, where WS is acting as an antecedent to EI. Thus, in terms of the research question asked in the section 2, it could be understood that emotional intelligence causes workplace spirituality rather than vice-versa.

4.4. Regression Analysis

From path analysis, regression estimates were also calculated & their results are shown in the Table 3

Table 3: Regression Analysis

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Inner_life	<---	Reg_EM	0.271	0.109	2.476	0.013
Meaning_work	<---	Reg_EM	-0.182	0.105	-1.74	0.082
Sense_comm	<---	Reg_EM	0.2	0.115	1.733	0.083
Inner_life	<---	Self_Em_App	0.118	0.109	1.077	0.281
Meaning_work	<---	Self_Em_App	0.416	0.105	3.969	***
Sense_comm	<---	Self_Em_App	0.309	0.115	2.682	0.007
Meaning_work	<---	Other_Em_App	0.317	0.105	3.025	0.002
Inner_life	<---	Other_Em_App	0.214	0.109	1.955	0.051
Sense_comm	<---	Other_Em_App	-0.159	0.115	-1.379	0.168
Inner_life	<---	Use_EM	0.334	0.109	3.054	0.002
Meaning_work	<---	Use_EM	0.046	0.105	0.443	0.657

Table 3: Contd.,						
Sense_comm	<---	Use_EM	0.02	0.115	0.175	0.861
JS_1	<---	Inner_life	0.106	0.051	2.063	0.039
JS_1	<---	Meaning_work	0.268	0.051	5.24	***
JS_1	<---	Sense_comm	0.055	0.051	1.072	0.284
JS_1	<---	Reg_EM	0.097	0.054	1.79	0.073
JS_1	<---	Self_Em_App	0.144	0.054	2.663	0.008
JS_1	<---	Other_Em_App	0.085	0.054	1.567	0.117
JS_1	<---	Use_Em	0.17	0.054	3.122	0.002

In Table 3, it could be observed that, in terms of components of emotional intelligence, Self Emotions Appraisal (SEA) is the most important component of emotional intelligence, as it has significant impact upon finding meaning in work, sense of community & job satisfaction. This is followed by Use of Emotion (UOE) which has significant impact upon inner life & job satisfaction. It was also found that Other Emotions Appraisal (OEA) has significant impact upon sense of community & Regulation of Emotion (ROE) has significant impact upon inner life.

5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY & SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study suffers from following limitations.

- The sample size is not adequate to represent the total working population in service sector in Chandigarh region.
- The study is a preliminary investigation into the relationship between two most popular constructs of the present time in management i.e. workplace spirituality & emotional intelligence.

Further research with large sample size consisting of population from diverse sectors could be conducted.

6. CONCLUSIONS

With the emergence of so many new concepts, the Human Resource Manager finds himself in utter confusion as to which concept is to be given more importance. The HR manager could be put at ease, if it could be proven that all major concepts in HR are interlinked to one or two concepts and if those concepts could be taken care of, the other desired results would automatically fall in line. There are two major directions presently trending in organizational behavior literature is that of workplace spirituality & emotional intelligence, the present study is an attempt to show that these two major concepts are interlinked and if it could be developed as one concept, the other would automatically be developed. Although the research is at a nascent stage, it still provides valuable insights to HR Managers.

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